MARVEL

2

LGY#281

PERCY SOARES JUNIOR D'ARMATA

PARENTAL ADVISORY

THE PUNISHER

KILL ME NOW.

@#$%.

MUSCLES-- HRK--ARE SCREAMING. ATROPHIED.

WAS LOCKED IN THAT DAMN CHAIR TOO LONG, FRANK.*

*SEE PUNISHER: RED BAND.

EVERYTHING HURTS.

OH, GOD.

I'VE GOT TO RELEARN HOW TO DO THIS WHOLE WALKING THING.

GUESS I'VE GOT TO RELEARN THIS WHOLE FRANK THING TOO, DON'T I?

YOU SAID YOU COULD HELP ME, MICRO.

HELP ME.

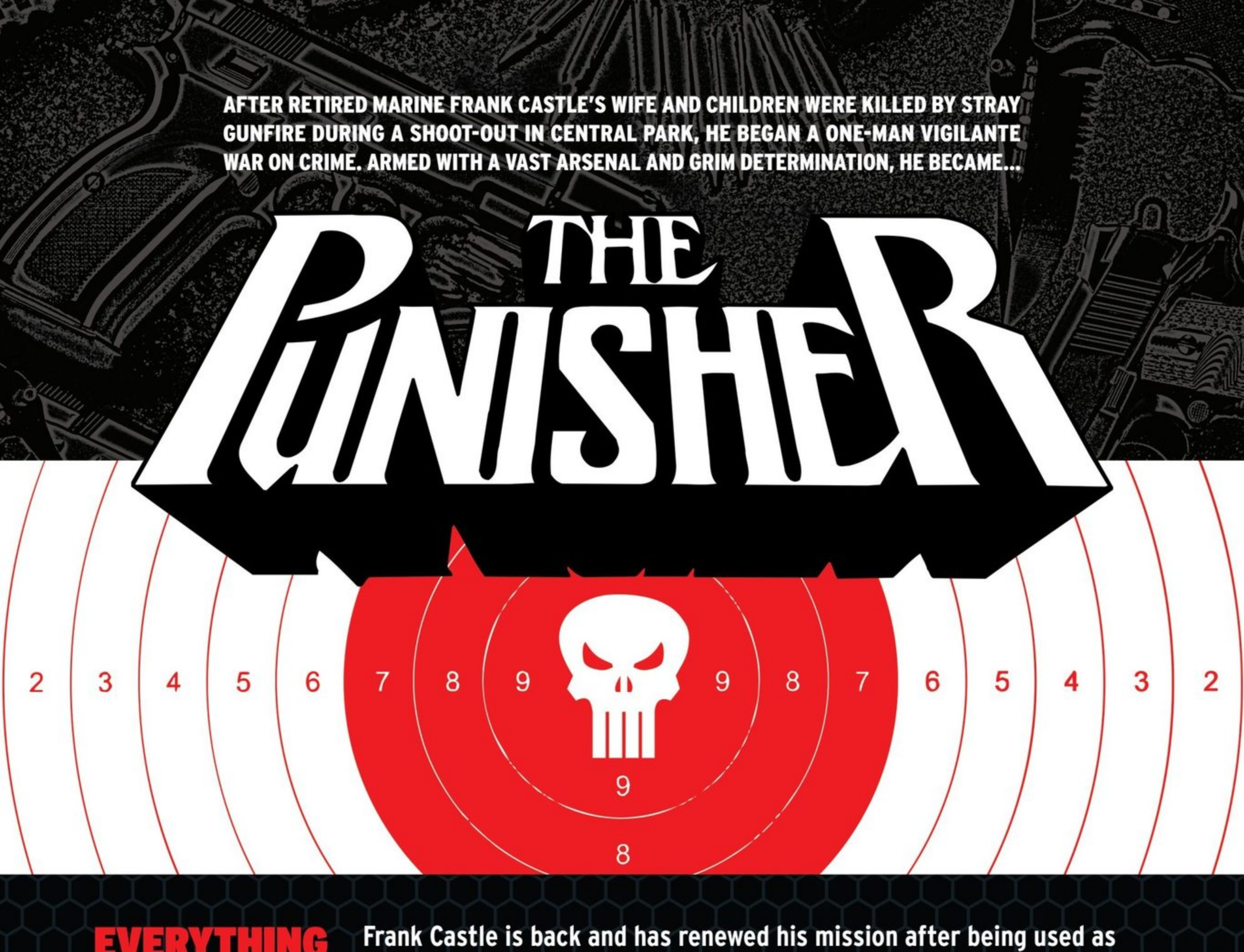
YOU KNOW I'D BE *A LOT MORE* HELPFUL AFTER A SHOWER AND A CHEESEBURGER.

BUT-- GAAA--I'LL DO IT!

I'LL @#$%@& DO IT!

WHATEVER'S WRONG WITH YOUR BRAIN, WE'RE GOING TO NEED A DOCTOR.

AND NOT JUST *ANY* DOCTOR.


AFTER RETIRED MARINE FRANK CASTLE'S WIFE AND CHILDREN WERE KILLED BY STRAY GUNFIRE DURING A SHOOT-OUT IN CENTRAL PARK, HE BEGAN A ONE-MAN VIGILANTE WAR ON CRIME. ARMED WITH A VAST ARSENAL AND GRIM DETERMINATION, HE BECAME...
THE PUNISHER
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
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8

EVERYTHING HURTS

Frank Castle is back and has renewed his mission after being used as a mind-controlled hitman. He is holding his old ally, Microchip, as a prisoner for his part in his manipulation, but now needs his help to fix his mysterious blackouts. But Jigsaw has also returned, looking to claim New York City's criminal underworld as his own, putting the Punisher at the top of his hit list...

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NO. @#$%& NO.

NOT-IN-A-MILLION-YEARS NO.

HOSPITAL

HOSPITAL

YOU DON'T HAVE A CHOICE, DOC.

YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT, OR YOU WOULDN'T BE MEETING WITH US IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.

WHY *ME?*

THERE AREN'T THAT MANY NEUROSURGEONS, YOU KNOW. YOU'RE KIND OF AN ELITE GROUP.

I RAN SOME QUERIES ON ALL OF YOU. YOU CAME UP AS THE DIRTIEST.

SO UNLESS YOU WANT YOUR ADDICTION TO WHORES, GAMBLING AND PAINKILLERS GETTING OUT, YOU'RE GONNA DO AS I SAY.

THIS IS INSANE. AND ILLEGAL.

YOUR FRIEND NEEDS HELP? WHY CAN'T HE SPEAK FOR HIMSELF?

TRUST ME. YOU *DON'T* WANT TO TALK TO HIM.

CONVERSATION IS *NOT* HIS STRONG POINT.

EVERYTHING OKAY, DOC?

NO, EVERYTHING'S NOT OKAY.

ESCORT THESE TWO OUT OF THE HOSPITAL.

OH @#%&.

KUNCH

NNNGH.

OKAY. OKAY, I'LL DO IT.

LET'S... JUST CALM DOWN.

WNEX NEWS.

YOU WERE GONE. NOW YOU'RE BACK...

...BUT WHY?

YOU'VE BEEN DOING THIS FOR YEARS AND YEARS AND YEARS--SOMETIMES QUIETLY, SOMETIMES LOUDLY.

DAILY BUGLE

BLOOD JUSTICE

PUNISHER KILLS AGAIN

WHO ARE YOU REALLY? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

AND HOW CAN YOU GET ME THAT *DESK-ANCHOR* JOB?

NEWS

VIGILANTE HAUNTS STREETS

OH--HEY, GARY.

HOPE I'M NOT IN YOUR WAY.

I'M SUPPOSED TO BE GETTING THIS RIDICULOUS PIECE DONE.

ABOUT A PUPPY PARADE, IF YOU CAN BELIEVE IT.

THE NEWS DIRECTOR'S PUNISHING ME.

THINKS I'M *TROUBLE.*

YOU SEE ME BUSTING MY ASS IN HERE NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, YEAH?

I DESERVE A BREAKTHROUGH, RIGHT?

AND I THINK I'VE GOT IT.

I NEED MORE COFFEE.

CAN I GET YOU ANYTHING, GARY?

GOOD EVENING, THIS IS MADELINE PHIPPS.

THIS IS MADELINE PHIPPS, YOUR TRUSTED SOURCE HERE AT WNEX NEWS.

MADELINE PHIPPS HERE WITH SOME LATE BREAKING NEWS.

A FAMILIAR DARKNESS HAS RETURNED TO NEW YORK CITY...

BE OUTSIDE THE BAR NOIRE AT 4 AM

GARY?

THERE HE IS!

GARY, GARY, BO-BERRY.

BANANA-FANNA-FO-FERRY.

FEE-FI-FO-FERRY.

GARY!

HEY... GARY? WHAT'S UP, MAN?

EVERYTHING OKAY?

GOING HOME SICK.

I'M NOT FEELING LIKE MYSELF.

RYKER'S.
SOLITARY CONFINEMENT.

JIGSAW THINKS HE CAN MAKE A MOVE ON ME.

@#$%& THAT MOPE.

GET ME...

...THE @#$%...

...OUT OF HERE!

DON'T BOTHER, TOMBSTONE.

DOOR'S REINFORCED TO KEEP MONSTERS LIKE YOU IN THEIR PLACE.

I RUN THIS TOWN!

YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST THROW ME IN A HOLE AND PEOPLE WILL FORGET I EXIST?!

NOBODY'S GONNA FORGET ABOUT YOU.

THEY'RE GONNA THINK ABOUT YOU EVERY DAY.

THEY'RE GONNA THINK-- I'M SO @#$%@& HAPPY HE'S IN THERE AND NOT OUT HERE.

I'M SO @#$%@& HAPPY THAT COP-KILLING PIECE OF GARBAGE IS WHERE HE BELONGS.

WHATEVER HE'S PAYING YOU? I'LL TRIPLE.

THAT'S NOT THE WAY THIS IS GONNA WORK.

WHY ARE YOU HELPING HIM?

LET'S JUST SAY...

...HE MADE AN IMPRESSION ON ME.

ALL YOU GOTTA DO IS SIGN.

I WON'T SIGN THAT $#%&!

I WON'T!

HE THINKS HE CAN THREATEN MY FAMILY.

HE THINKS HE CAN BREAK ME IN HERE.

I'M UN-@#$%#&-BREAKABLE.

KEEP CUTTING AND YOU'LL NEVER FIND A NERVE.

JIGSAW'S STILL GONNA GET YOUR BUSINESS.

IN FACT, HE'S CALLING AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF YOUR PEOPLE RIGHT NOW.

THEY'RE ALL HEADED TO ONE OF YOUR RESTAURANTS.

THE NOIRE, I THINK IT WAS.

SHOULD BE A MEAL TO REMEMBER.

TEN BUCKS SAYS YOUR BRAIN TURNS OUT TO BE AN URN FULL OF ASH AND SPIDERS.

MMPH--GOD, THIS HOSPITAL FOOD AIN'T BAD.

WHEN-- SMAK--YOU'RE STARVED ANYWAY.

I GOT WHAT I NEED.

SO... LOOK, YOU'RE A MESS.

I ONLY SCANNED YOUR SHOULDERS UP AND...

...I'VE NEVER SEEN SO MUCH SCAR TISSUE AND SHRAPNEL.

IT'S HARD TO UNDERSTAND HOW YOU'RE ALIVE.

AS FOR YOUR BRAIN... IT'S MORE OF THE SAME.

YOU EITHER PLAYED FOR THE NFL OR YOU SERVED IN THE MILITARY-- PROBABLY WITH HEAVY ARTILLERY--BECAUSE I'VE GOT EVIDENCE OF ***EXTENSIVE*** bTBI.

IT'S A HORROR SHOW IN THERE.

I COULD HAVE--*SMAK*--*MMPH*--TOLD YOU THAT.

MULTIPLE ANEURYSMS, ALL HEALED.

MOST PEOPLE IN THIS KIND OF SHAPE WOULD BE CURLED UP IN A DROOLING BALL.

AND -*GULP*- WHOEVER PERFORMED SURGERY ON YOUR SKULL WAS AN ABSOLUTE BUTCHER.

BUT...

...YOU'RE OTHERWISE OKAY?

I MEAN... CLEARLY, YOU'RE NOT OKAY-OKAY.

BOTH OF YOU GUYS ARE @#$%@& LUNATICS.

I TOLD YOU, MAN! HE'S STROKING OUT EVERY TIME HE GETS WORKED UP!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO TELL YOU.

THERE IS NO PHYSIOLOGICAL REASON THAT SHOULD BE HAPPENING.

WHOA, WHOA, WHOA!

I DIDN'T SEE THE SKULL BEFORE.

ARE YOU *HIM?* ARE YOU THE @#$%& *PUNISHER?*

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME.

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO FIX IT.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU CAN'T BE FIXED WITH A SCALPEL.

YOU'RE LYING.

I'M NOT!

I'M NOT LYING! I SWEAR TO YOU! ON MY CHILDREN'S SOULS AND THE HIPPOCRATIC OATH AND WHATEVER THE HELL ELSE COUNTS TO YOU!

YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO FIGURE THIS @#$% OUT FOR YOURSELF!

FRANK?

FRANK!

YOU SEE?

I @#$%@& TOLD YOU!

DO SOMETHING!

I'M NOT FIXING A MASS MURDERER.

DO YOU NOT REMEMBER WHAT I PROMISED TO DO TO YOU?

WHAT DO YOU WANT? A REFERRAL FOR A SHRINK?

HERE...THERE'S SOME LITHIUM IN THERE.

SEE IF THAT WORKS AS A STABILIZER.

I'M DONE WITH YOU PSYCHOS.

FRANK... I MEAN...

...MAYBE THIS IS A GOOD THING?

MAYBE THIS MEANS YOU CAN STOP?

WALK AWAY FROM ALL OF IT.

MAYBE THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT?

MAYBE THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO TELL YOURSELF EVEN IF YOU CAN'T SAY IT OUT LOUD.

WHY THE @#$%& DID YOU DRAG ME OUT OF BED?

MADELINE?

WILL YOU QUIT WHINING, KEITH?

I PROMISE YOU IT WILL BE WORTH IT. FOR BOTH OF US.

NOTHING IS WORTH 4 A.M., MAN.

THIS IS.

DON'T YOU SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING?

GET YOUR CAMERA READY.

WE'VE GOT REPS HERE FROM SOME OF THE BIGGEST CRIME SYNDICATES.

EVERY BOROUGH'S REPRESENTED-- ALONG WITH JERSEY CITY AND NEWARK.

HOW DO YOU EVEN KNOW THAT?

BECAUSE I DO MY @#$%@& HOMEWORK, KEITH.

AND BECAUSE I'D *KILL* TO GET THAT DESK-ANCHOR JOB.

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT ANYWAY?

I DON'T LIKE THIS EMERGENCY-MEETING BULL.

WHERE'S TOMBSTONE?

WELCOME TO THE BAR NOIRE, GENTLEMEN.

THE NEWS IS SAYING HE'S IN HOLDING AT RYKER'S.

UNFORTUNATELY, TOMBSTONE IS GOING TO BE LATE...

...BUT HE ASKED ME TO TAKE *SPECIAL* CARE OF YOU.

NEXT: BAD TIMES AT THE BAR NOIRE!

Frankly Speaking

EDITOR: DEVIN LEWIS ASST. ED.: DREW BAUMGARTNER EIC: C.B. CEBULSKI

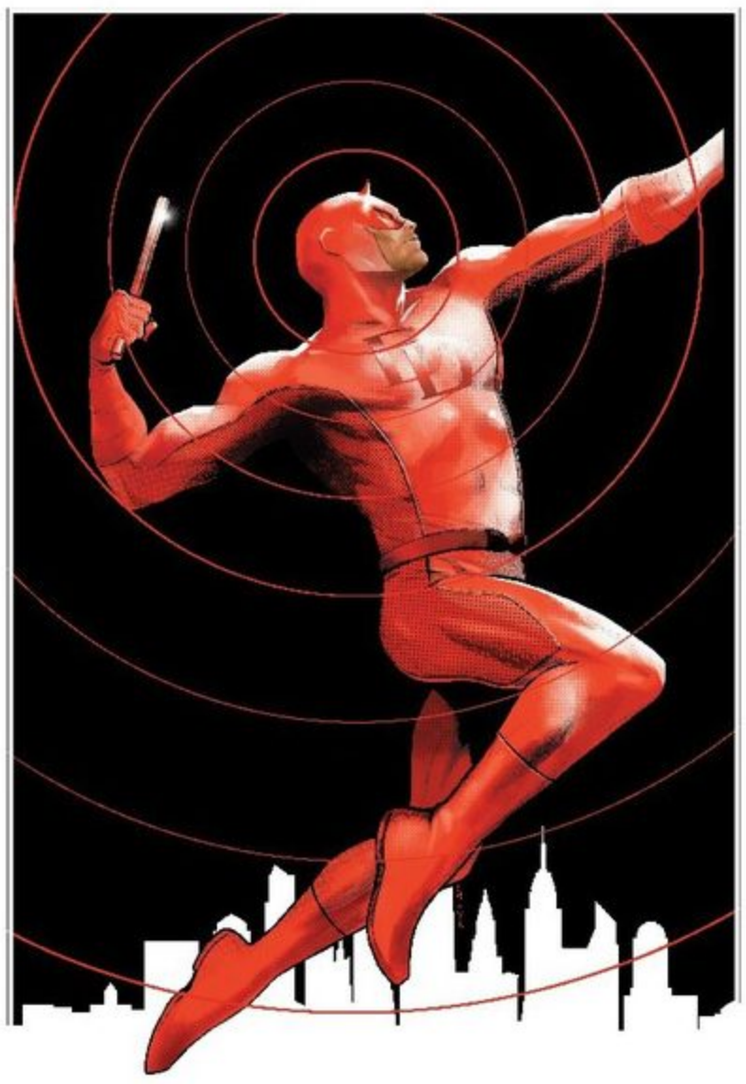
EMAIL US AT MHEROES@MARVEL.COM AND MARK YOUR MESSAGES "OKAY TO PRINT" FOR A CHANCE TO SEE THEM ANSWERED IN FUTURE ISSUES!

FACE FRONT, MARVELITES!

This spring, your street-level editors at the House of Ideas are bringing you the most scintillating and senses-shattering sagas in all of Mighty Marveldom!

As you've made it this far into this particular comics mag, we don't need to tell you to keep buying PUNISHER (though we'll certainly encourage you to return to your comic shop and buy a few more copies to share with your friends, family and personal enemies), but we did want to spotlight at least a couple of the other incredible stories we're bringing to you in the Mighty Marvel Manner!

At the time of this writing, MARC SPECTOR: MOON KNIGHT #1 has just gone on sale to critical and reader ACCLAIM! Issue #2 is already waiting for you on the rack of your finest local purveyor of comic bookery, and so don't walk but RUN to get both right now if you haven't already! It's a dynamic and deadly trip through the psyches of both Marc Spector and some of his most notorious foes, with superstar writer JED MacKAY and your new favorite artist DEVMALYA PRAMANIK at the helm! I love this damn book, and you will too! TRUST ME!



PLUS! DAREDEVIL IS BACK! With an all-new creative team and an all-new status quo as a college professor, Daredevil's latest saga has just begun with a blind-bag bang! The second of Marvel's TRUE BELIEVERS BLIND BAG offerings, there's no telling what highly sought-after cover may be waiting for you in yours! A variant cover featuring art by industry legend GABRIELE DELL'OTTO?! A one-of-a-kind hand-drawn sketch from the likes of ALEX MALEEV?! Or something even beyond those two prized picks, the likes of which are so unfathomably awesome that I just cannot bring myself to mention them in this very column?! Find out by picking one up at your local comic shop when they go on sale next week—and while you're at it, add DAREDEVIL to your pull list! You won't regret it!

And of course, we'll be back here next month for PUNISHER #3, as both Frank's condition and Jigsaw's plans keep getting worse. We don't want to give away any more than that as there are more than a few unexpected surprises—it's an installment not to be missed!

NEXT: